

COVID-19 Vaccine- Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When will a vaccine for COVID-19 be ready?

We do not know for certain when a COVID-19 vaccine will be available in Kentucky. However, we are tracking the progress of various COVID-19 vaccines being tested in vaccine trials. We are preparing to distribute vaccine in Kentucky once a vaccine is approved. States and territories have been instructed to expect a limited quantity initial shipment.

Q: How do vaccines get approved?

Vaccines go through three phases of clinical trial. Each phase tests for safety and effectiveness across an increasing number of test volunteers.

- In phase 1, potential vaccines are tested by approximately 20-100 people.
- In phase 2, potential vaccines are tested by several hundred volunteers.
- In phase 3, vaccines are tested by thousands of volunteers.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will approve a vaccine only if it is safe, effective and if its benefits outweigh its risks.

Q: Will the vaccine be safe?

Safety is a top priority. COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same standards as other vaccines to make sure they are safe. To ensure safety of vaccines in the United States, there is a rigorous vaccine development and approval process. Following approval of a vaccine, there are several systems in place to continue to ensure safety.

Q: What steps are taken to ensure safety after a vaccine is approved?

After a vaccine is approved and distributed, vaccine monitoring systems are used to watch for possible side effects. If an unexpected side effect is seen, experts study it to determine whether changes are needed in vaccine recommendations.

The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) is a national vaccine safety surveillance program of the FDA and CDC. VAERS collects and analyzes information from reports of adverse events (e.g., side effects) that occur after a vaccine has been approved and distributed. Anyone can submit a report to VAERS by going to this link: <https://vaers.hhs.gov/reportevent.html>

There are several programs and initiatives, in addition to VAERS, that monitor vaccine safety. These include CDC's Vaccine Safety Datalink and Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment Project, and FDA's Biologics Effectiveness and Safety System and Sentinel Initiative. More information about these different systems is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html>

Q: What is being done in Kentucky to raise awareness that a vaccine is coming, who's eligible to take it, and when?

Kentuckians and others may check the www.kycovid19.ky.gov site for regular updates. Governor Andy Beshear's daily press updates, which ordinarily take place Monday-Thursday at 4 p.m. Eastern, provide COVID-19 information. Live updates are hosted on Facebook, with the archived link posted a few hours later on the Governor's YouTube channel. Additionally, many Kentucky Public Media affiliates carry the press conferences streamed live from their websites, including [WKU NPR](#) and [WEKU](#). The clinical perspective is provided by the commissioner of the Department for Public Health, and the [KDPH website](#) also posts information. The Cabinet for Health and Family Services also provides updates, including long-term care, behavioral health, health coverage, food and other benefits, and resources. Please visit www.kynect.ky.gov for more information, including how to apply for help.

Additionally, Kentuckians will be made aware of developments with the COVID-19 vaccine distribution by way of social media, traditional media, broadcast outlets and highly visible places, including billboards and bus stops.

Q: Will Governor Beshear receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, Governor Beshear has committed to receiving the vaccine at the appropriate time. He announced that First Lady Brittainy Beshear will also take the coronavirus vaccine.

Q: What are the phases of the vaccine distribution plan?

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) proposed an initial draft framework but that ACIP will propose a revised phasing premised on much more actionable information and that KY will review and refine as needed to fit KY's specific circumstances.